

JRSA's JABG Technical Support Center

The Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA) is working with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) to provide technical assistance to states in calculating local allocation amounts under the Juvenile Accountability Block Grants (JABG) formula required in the legislation. The Technical Support Center provides States with the crime and expenditure data collected by the Federal government, along with supporting documentation. The Center also maintains a Web site that provides award amounts to local governments for each State in the form of spreadsheets that can be downloaded directly from the site.

The JABG Program

In FY 1998, Congress provided funds to establish the Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants (JAIBG) program. Renamed in 2004, the program provides financial assistance to States and units of local government to enhance their efforts to combat serious and violent juvenile crime. JABG encourages accountability-based reforms, and funds must be used in 17 purpose areas related to holding juveniles accountable for criminal behavior. These purpose areas are specified in the JABG legislation.

OJJDP administers the JABG program and awards grants to States, which are required to allocate 75 percent of the funds to eligible units of local government. A State can, however, apply for a waiver of the 75 percent requirement if it can demonstrate that it incurs more than half of the costs of juvenile justice administration in the State.

Allocation of awards to units of local government is based on a formula specified in the JABG legislation. The formula looks at the 3 most recent years for which data are available and takes into account the locality's relative share of criminal justice expenditures and Part I violent offenses.

The minimum amount for a subgrant award to a locality is \$10,000.

Technical Assistance for States

Although most State JABG administrators have access to their State's crime data, few have access to local expenditure data and most lack the resources or time to calculate the JABG formula. To help States calculate local allocation amounts, OJJDP and BJS established the JABG Technical Support Center, an online tool maintained by the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA). The Center provides States the local award amounts. States can also access the crime and expenditure data used in the formula.

Resources available from the Technical Support Center include a special Web site page for each State and the District of Columbia; documentation on the JABG program; expenditure, crime, and tribal data used by the program; and examples of JABG-related documents used in the States.

In addition to providing formula calculations for JABG, the Center offers technical assistance to States in determining award amounts. An analyst is available to help State administrators determine whether to use data provided on the Web site or data collected in the State and to answer questions regarding local allocations. The analyst can also provide assistance with recalculating allocation amounts and can provide individualized award spreadsheets.

Data Sources for JABG

The Federal government collects both crime and expenditure data from the States and localities. Crime data are collected by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. The U.S. Department of

Commerce's Bureau of the Census collects expenditure information through the Census of Governments survey. Although the formula requires the use of the three most recent years of data, the Census Bureau collects information for all units of local government at 5-year intervals. In order to use the most current data possible, only the most recent year of expenditure data is used in the formula calculations. For the JABG program, only direct current operating expenditures for judicial and legal programs and corrections are included in the formula.

Although Tribal Nations are eligible to receive JABG funding, neither the FBI nor the Census Bureau collects data from tribes. In order to include Tribal Nations, JRSA receives data from the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). State administrators also receive these data.

State Data Pages

Each State page lists all units of local government and defines "unit of local government" as set forth in the JABG legislation. Allocation calculations are available in different formats: an interactive worksheet of all allocation amounts and spreadsheets of only allocations above the \$10,000 threshold. States that receive waivers to distribute less than 75 percent of grant money to units of local government can enter the percentage that is being distributed into the interactive worksheet and the local amounts will recalculate based on the new allocation amount.

The data files are also available to States on JABG's State Data Page upon request.

Finally, States have the option of including the BIA data for tribes. States can also request these data for review.

Each year, allocation amounts are updated to include newly available data. An additional year of crime data from the FBI is added, and Census Bureau and tribal data are updated as new data become available. Each year's data are checked to ensure that the data files are complete and represent the majority of local governments for each State. Where data sets are incomplete, state data are used, where available.

For Further Information

For more information about JRSA's JABG Technical Support Center, access the Web site at www.jrsa.org/JABG or contact Lisa Walbolt Wagner at JABG@jrsa.org or (202) 842-9330.